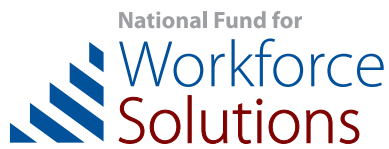


Systems Change in the National Fund: Case Studies from the Field





The **National Fund for Workforce Solutions** is a growing national partnership of employers, workers, communities, local and national funders, and workforce practitioners that work to strengthen local economies by implementing demand-driven employment strategies that advance the skills of American workers while also resolving the skills gaps facing American businesses. Operating in 35 communities across 26 states, the National Fund works with its partner communities to drive practices, policies, and investments to improve family-supporting career opportunities for low-wage and unemployed individuals, provide employers with skilled workers, and advance local economic development.

Integral to its success is the fact that the National Fund model engages employers in its workforce and economic development activities and uses these

strong relationships to identify local skills gaps, target critical workers, and coordinate collective solutions to local and regional workforce challenges. Since 2007, the National Fund has provided more than 67,000 individuals with education and training services to help them prepare for and advance their careers. At the same time, the National Fund has served over 5,000 employers employing over 1 million workers by assisting them to find and retain the skilled workers they need to remain competitive. Starting in 2007 and currently in its second five-year phase, the National Fund has received recognition from the Obama administration as an exemplary model for employer-responsive training and a key partner in the White House's UpSkill America Initiative.

To learn more, visit: www.nfwsolutions.org

About the Author

Lisa Soricone serves on JFF's Building Economic Opportunity Group, helping low-skilled adults advance to family-supporting careers, while enabling employers to build and sustain a productive workforce. Specifically, she helps to document learning and evaluate the success of programs that help adults to advance in their education and work lives, including Accelerating Opportunity and the National Fund for Workforce Solutions. She has contributed to publications, including *Thinking Big: A Framework for States on Scaling Up Community College Innovation and Promoting Persistence Through Comprehensive Student Supports*.

Before joining JFF, Dr. Soricone was a research and evaluation analyst at Commonwealth Corporation

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PHOTOGRAPH courtesy of CareerEdge Funder Collaborative

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Examples of Systems Change

Introduction

Operating in thirty-five communities across twenty-six states, the National Fund for Workforce Solutions works with its partner communities to drive practices, policies, and investments to improve family-supporting career opportunities for low-wage and unemployed individuals, provide employers with skilled workers, and advance local economic development.

Since its inception in 2007, National Fund and its regional collaboratives have invested in improving the education and workforce systems that provide opportunities for workers to advance and businesses to prosper. Through the work of these regional funder collaboratives and their industry partnerships, National Fund communities have intentionally pursued systems change as a critical strategy to enhance its impact and scale by sustaining positive changes over time.

“Systems change” is a dynamic process that refers to changes in organizational policies, procedures, practices, and culture that improve services or activities aimed at benefitting specific stakeholders, markets, or populations. It is a process that alters the perspectives, behavior, and relationships among individuals and organizations within workforce systems. It expands the reach of benefits and makes lasting improvements to system activity. In order to address all elements of the workforce systems, the National Fund focuses its systems change efforts on four areas:

- › **Education and workforce development systems**
- › **Employer practices**
- › **Public policy and investments**
- › **Funders’ perspectives and investments**

To achieve its impact, the National Fund created a model structured around the organization of regional funder collaboratives that engage both public and private funders to establish strategic priorities and guide investments. Collaboratives are also charged with organizing employer-led, sector-focused industry partnerships that generate detailed information about a sector’s labor market and

develop a training/education strategy to address the gap between what is needed and what is available in a community.

Regional collaboratives and industry partnerships pursue systems change by convening stakeholders to communicate information and ideas, build relationships, and develop solutions to regional and local workforce issues. Systems change is a dynamic process in which collaboratives and partnerships work together to develop shared goals and strategies, mobilize resources, build the capacity of workforce system professionals and entities, and exchange information within their communities to promote change. This process is depicted in the following figure on page 2.

The National Fund has learned what constitutes “change” depends on the pre-existing culture and conditions in a community or region, and that ultimately systems change is about altering the way organizations work individually and collectively to increase the quality and scale of services and opportunities offered to workers and employers. Furthermore, the National Fund’s work has revealed that meaningful systems change must be institutionalized in practice or policy in order to be sustained.

The following case studies, drawn from the experience of National Fund communities, provide specific examples of systems change in workforce development. Each case describes systems change in the areas of workforce development systems, employer practices, public policy systems and investments, or funder perceptions and investments.

Leaders of the National Fund offer this publication as a contribution to the field’s understanding of systems change and to encourage broader pursuit and support for this important dimension of workforce development efforts. For additional examples of systems change within the National Fund and information regarding the National Fund’s approach to defining, measuring, and documenting systems change, please see the full report, Systems Change in the National Fund for Workforce Solutions, at <http://nfwsolutions.org/publications/systems-change-national-fund-for-workforce-solutions>.

SYSTEMS CHANGE IN THE NATIONAL FUND FOR WORKFORCE SOLUTIONS

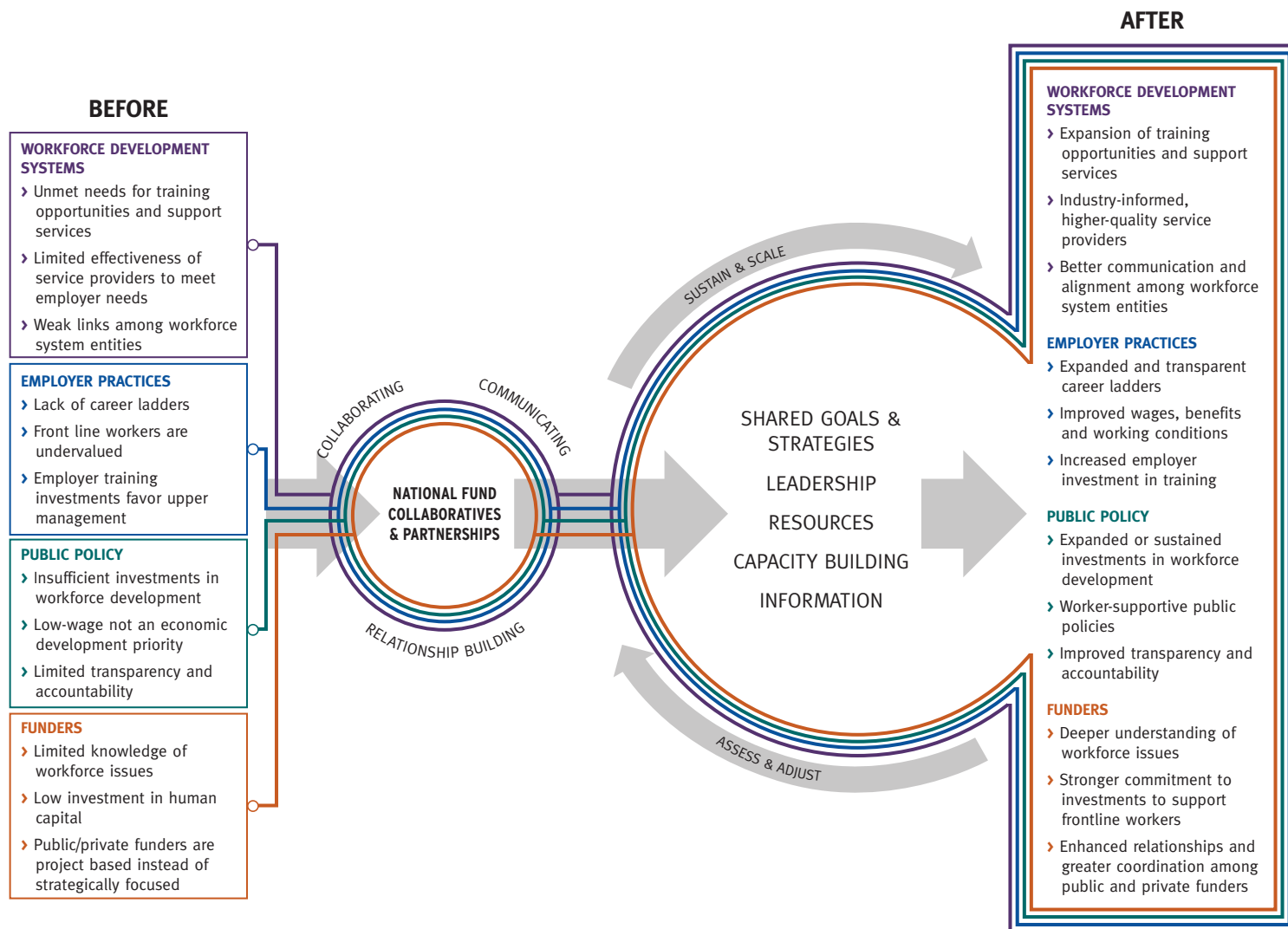


Figure One: Systems Change within the National Fund for Workforce Solutions

STRENGTHENING THE PUBLIC WORKFORCE SYSTEM

Kentucky Manufacturing Career Center Improves the Region's Workforce Training

Type of Change: Education and workforce development systems

Organization: KentuckianaWorks and WIRED65 Regional Workforce Partners

Community: Greater Louisville, Kentucky

Result: Creation of the Kentucky Manufacturing Career Center which is providing residents with training in and career access to the region's growing manufacturing industry.

The Context

By 2012, changes in greater Louisville's economy and expanded investments in local plants by Ford and General Electric (GE) raised the demand for skilled manufacturing workers. With the expansion of Ford and GE's operations, supplier companies also projected increased production further driving the demand for labor. While the need for workers increased, previous closures, off-shoring of jobs and manufacturing lay-offs had left the region with a weakened pipeline for manufacturing workers.

KentuckianaWorks, the leader of the local National Fund collaborative WIRED65 Regional Workforce Partners, decided to take action to build a future workforce. From their unique vantage, KentuckianaWorks staff saw employment opportunities and demand for workers but also a failure by the public system to connect skilled workers with open positions. Career centers typically had neither strong ties to employers, nor the ability to influence the nature and quality of local training programs. As a result, career centers' capacity for connecting workers with jobs was limited.

The Approach

Inspired by the National Fund's employer-focused mission, KentuckianaWorks used a new approach to address the shortage of manufacturing workers, and they brought together the services of a career center and training opportunities in a single sector-focused entity, the Kentucky Manufacturing Career Center (KMCC). The Center offers workers relevant, marketable credentials and facilitates their successful transitions to manufacturing jobs. To increase their effectiveness, KMCC added business services staff to meet with businesses to inform and improve job training and placement services.

To guide KMCC's development, staff benchmarked with the National Association for Manufacturers as well as manufacturing centers in Dayton, Ohio and Lafayette, Indiana. Staff convened a focus group of 12 employers who found the National Career Readiness Certificate an attractive entry-level credential. For manufacturing business the NCRC can lead to a Certified Production Technician credential associated with the Manufacturing Skills Standards Council. Employer involvement has grown as businesses, including GE, endorsed the credentials offered by the Center and offered preferential consideration of graduates as job candidates. At present, more than 60 employers attend monthly meetings or are engaged with the Center through hiring and job fairs.

The Impact

In its first two years, KMCC awarded 329 National Career Readiness Certificates and 144 Certified Production Technician credentials and placed more than 400 individuals in manufacturing jobs. Job seekers who need a GED or English as a Second Language instruction are enrolled in a Manufacturing Skills for Success class taught on site by the regional adult education partner.

Keys to Success

With its role in the public workforce system, KentuckianaWorks was well positioned to understand the challenges and opportunities related to the operation of career centers. Drawing upon and building on its employer relationships as a National Fund site helped leaders gain the deep industry knowledge needed to shape the KMCC. By working directly with employers, Deputy Director, Cindy Read, points out, it is critical to "understand not only their business, but also their hiring system and to problem solve with them." Strong employer engagement remains a critical pillar contributing to the success and sustainability of KMCC.

The combination of training and strengthened career services focused on a single sector represents a significant change in the Louisville region's public workforce development services. The high level of engagement among employers to support the complete process of engaging, training and placing workers makes KMCC a leader among its career center peers. Plans are underway to replicate the approach in the creation of a health care-focused career center in the region.

The New York Alliance for Careers in Healthcare (NYACH) Establishes a Model for Citywide Change

Type of Change: Education and workforce development systems

Organization: NYACH (New York Alliance for Careers in Healthcare), Community Health Care Association of New York State (CHCANYS), and City University of New York

Community: New York City, New York

Result: The creation of a more industry responsive curriculum for medical assistants and the implementation of a more effective workforce development model throughout New York City.

The Context

The New York Alliance for Careers in Healthcare (NYACH) was established in 2011 through the public-private partnership of the New York City Department of Small Business Services (SBS), which oversees the city’s public One Stop Career Centers (called “Workforce1 Centers”), and the New York City Workforce Funders, a group of more than 40 private foundations that work together to enhance the effectiveness of workforce development programs in New York City. The creation of NYACH stemmed from concerns about the health care industry’s rapid transformation and the City’s ability to train and supply qualified workers to meet evolving employer needs. The mission of NYACH is intentional systems change: to “build an effective health care workforce development system in New York City by identifying health care employers’ needs; helping education and training organizations adapt their approach to better meet those needs, and ensuring low-income and unemployed New Yorkers have access to viable career opportunities in health care.”¹ Leaders were uncertain whether health care training programs were in a position to keep pace with change, whether labor market and policy information was available to inform employers, and whether low-income city residents would have access to jobs opportunities.

The Approach

NYACH brings together diverse partners representing hospitals, nursing care facilities, community health centers, home care, the City’s public university system, and a labor-management partnership that provides educational and training benefits to workers to encourage information exchange, coordination among workforce activities, and cross-agency collaboration. NYACH supports multiple

training partnerships and initiatives that aim to prepare and advance a range of health care workers.

The Impact

By bringing these entities together, NYACH established the foundation for systems change that lead to multiple successes including the creation of an industry-led curriculum for Medical Assistants. As Clara Park, NYACH Program Manager sees it, “having these partners come together to talk about the same workforce issues is in and of itself a huge achievement.” Having key players at the table opens the way for opportunities for change. Recent revamping of medical assistant training programs provides an example of how NYACH carries out its work through targeted partnerships. During 2012 meetings health care providers noted a shortage of Medical Assistants. To address the problem, partner organization, Community Health Care Association of New York State (CHCANYS) worked with training providers of the City University of New York to redesign the Medical Assistant curriculum to better equip students to take on the changing medical tasks and new standards under the Affordable Care Act. The curriculum was successfully piloted at two community colleges in New York (Borough of Manhattan CC and Lehman College) and is now being used at four of the city’s community colleges.

NYACH’s work in health care represents a significant improvement in the way that varied organizations and stakeholders work together to address workforce development. By bringing key stakeholders together, partners can determine the skills and qualifications required for successful employment and adjust training opportunities accordingly. Moreover, NYACH is in a position to blend private and public funding. NYACH’s close working relationship with SBS allows leaders to draw on real-time employer information to guide the effective investment of WIA (federal) funds directed to trainings and through the National Fund collaborative, NYACH can draw on private support from the New York City Workforce Funders to supplement and extend the impact of public workforce investments.

Keys to Success

NYACH’s success has been supported by the willingness of local funders to invest in NYACH as an intermediary to convene stakeholders and guide their collaboration, the collaborative spirit demonstrated by the organizations

involved, and the hard work and commitment of NYACH's director to pursue and maintain stakeholder relationships. To move the partners toward change, NYACH staff has had to develop an understanding of each institution, as described by NYACH Director of External Relations and Communications, Hannah Weinstock, "Part of working with any collaborative is understanding the goals, missions, constituencies, as well as the institutional constraints and opportunities of each institution. Each entity has its own way of working. Understanding the institutions is important to determine how to best collaborate and leverage each one's strengths." A key to helping leverage those strengths toward change has been NYACH leadership's establishing expectations that this work is about more than training; it is about changing the way workforce development is being done in healthcare in New York.

NYACH's impact extends past health care as its industry partnership model has been adopted by New York City Mayor de Blasio. In the recent Career Pathways: One City Working Together report, the partnership approach was highlighted as a key strategy to expand the city's "capacity to provide job-relevant skills and education."² This is a strong example of how a systemic improvement in one sector can contribute to a greater impact on other industries, thereby achieving both scale and sustainability.

The Southwest Alabama Workforce Development Council (SAWDC) Integrates Employers into Workforce Development Systems

Type of Change: Education and workforce development systems

Organization: The Southwest Alabama Workforce Development Council (SAWDC)

Community: Greater Mobile, Alabama

Result: The development of a better-informed and more industry-responsive workforce development system.

The Context

In 2006, Alabama's governor established ten regional workforce development councils in an effort to help ensure a more effective distribution of workforce development resources aimed at helping community colleges respond to industry needs. Prior to that time, in the absence of a mechanism for identifying regional needs, such resources had been disproportionately concentrated in the capital region. The councils were thus designed to involve employers at the local level in shaping the distribution of resources provided to community colleges.

Created as part of this effort in 2008, SAWDC works with employers, community colleges, funders and others to support the workforce needs of employers while providing opportunities for advancement to new and incumbent workers. Working with employers across eight counties, SAWDC focuses its efforts on working with specific industry clusters to gain a deep understanding of employers' workforce needs to better utilize workforce development resources.

The Approach

The SAWDC approach is to strengthen employer communities by offering services, assistance, and expertise. While its activities are employer-led, SAWDC's efforts are designed to allow workers obtain the skills needed to secure successful careers in various industry clusters. SAWDC offers cluster partnership management and project coordination, as well as case management and tracking of training participants. In some instances, it offers capacity building to help industry clusters develop a workforce strategy and define performance measures. SAWDC employs its own scorecard to track progress in meeting its

own objectives around areas such as engaging industry clusters, influencing the education/training system and inspiring the future supply of workers.

The Impact

In its effort to enhance the responsiveness of the workforce development system, SAWDC works to influence the region's education and training system. One example of this approach is in recent work undertaken with the Central Gulf Industrial Alliance (CGIA), a partnership of industrial construction and manufacturing employers that include shipbuilding, paper, chemical manufacturing, and aviation companies, to create a program review tool to serve as the basis of an endorsement program for training providers in the region. In its early implementation with community colleges, the process has forged better ties between employers and the colleges as it helps to ensure the quality and relevance of the training offered. Of the seven programs reviewed across four community colleges, reviewers granted endorsements to two and are providing advising to the other five to promote their future endorsements.

Conclusion

The work of SAWDC is in itself a form of systems change in Alabama, since prior to its existence, there were few formal mechanisms for incorporating multiple perspectives from industry, public system, and economic development to guide investments in workforce development activities at the regional level. The cluster-focused approach has proved effective in serving both workers and employers and has been chosen as a model for workforce development councils across the state. In May 2014, the governor established the Alabama Workforce Council (on which two SAWDC members serve), charged with creating a high functioning regional council framework across the state, replicating the SAWDC model. Regional councils may vary in their composition and their locally designed strategies, but their overarching approach of understanding specific industry needs to align resources and influence the workforce development system to better meet those needs is meant to be consistent among councils across the state. In addition to SAWDC, two of the other nine workforce development regional councils in Alabama have become National Fund communities with a third council having submitted an application to join the network.

CHANGING PHILANTHROPY

A Conversation with Carl Whittaker, Director of the Herb and Maxine Jacobs Foundation, Boston, Massachusetts

Type of Change: Funders' Perspectives and Investments

Organization: SkillWorks and the Herb and Maxine Jacobs Foundation

Community: Greater Boston, Massachusetts

Result: Expansion and deepening of the perspectives and investments of a private foundation investing in workforce development through SkillWorks.

National Fund researcher and author of *Systems Change* in the National Fund for Workforce Solutions, Lisa Soricone spoke with Carl Whittaker, Director of the Herb and Maxine Jacobs Foundation on how the Jacobs Foundation's participation in SkillWorks altered its perspective on workforce development, changed its relationships to other funders in the city, and contributed to the foundation's learning as an organization.

Mr. Whittaker discussed how SkillWork's structure as a collaboration of multiple funding organizations allowed the Jacob's Foundation to participate in a vibrant philanthropic community and a learning network that deepened its understanding and investments in workforce development. SkillWorks serves as he points out, as an "incubation chamber for different ideas and an experimental platform to test new approaches, funding strategies, and more." Mr. Whittaker said, "Every time we meet with other foundations, it gives us grist for the mill or ideas to think about for months. With SkillWorks we are continually finding out about organizations that are just a little outside of what we do and areas of work about which we previously had no information" but that relate to the Foundation's focus on improving lives through vocational training.

In addition to building the foundation's network among philanthropic organizations in the city, being a part of the SkillWorks collaborative has helped Whittaker become more aware of city and state efforts to fund workforce development, which helps to support a better alignment of funding activities. As he puts it, with such knowledge "there's less of a chance to be working at odds with programs and more of an opportunity to get some extra leverage for investments." Involvement with SkillWorks,

has also provided the foundation with opportunities for learning and continuous improvement in areas such as evaluation and advocacy. Mr. Whittaker noted how reviewing the results of the SkillWorks Phase 2 evaluation led directly to the foundation's re-evaluation of its approach: "what we believe we can accomplish and how to measure if we are succeeding." Aside from learning related to evaluation, collaboration with SkillWorks has taught the Foundation about the advocacy process and amplified its voice in encouraging greater and more effective investment to connect Boston residents to family-supporting careers.

The Herb and Maxine Jacobs Foundation deems its participation in SkillWorks to be "transformative." The funding collaborative provided a learning community that informed the foundation's investments in workforce development and a funding collective that extended the foundation's impact on connecting area residents with opportunities for training and advancement.

INFORMING EMPLOYER PRACTICES

Partners for a Competitive Workforce Helps Employers Strengthen Their Training and Education Investments

Type of Change: Employer Practices

Organization: Partners for a Competitive Workforce (PCW) and the Health Careers Collaborative of Greater Cincinnati (HCC)

Community: Greater Cincinnati, Ohio

Result: The improvement of business-led investments in frontline workers and the creation of a more supportive tuition reimbursement policy.

The Context

Supported by Partners for a Competitive Workforce and in operation since 2004, the Health Careers Collaborative of Greater Cincinnati's (HCC) leadership includes representatives of four of the largest hospital systems in the region, which account for more than half of the region's health care employment. In addition, partners include local community colleges and several community-based organizations that provide training and supportive services.

When HCC began its work, employer tuition benefit policies favored professional employees working on bachelor and master's degrees. Employers provided less funding for incumbent workers earning professional certificates or associate's degrees so that workers typically used up their tuition allotment at lower levels and were not supported to pursue higher-level degrees.

The Approach

Focusing on improving the retention and career prospects of frontline health care workers, HCC members came together to reduce barriers to advancement for entry-level workers and focused on their companies' tuition reimbursement policies. Participating employers agreed to a number of important changes, including but not limited to prepaid tuition. As a condition of participation in the collaborative, employers committed to offer tuition benefits upfront so that students would not have to pay and wait for reimbursement. These changes are significant, as they demonstrate a strong and sustained commitment to providing growth opportunities to the lowest-paid, lowest-skilled health care workers.

The Impact

By preventing entry-level workers from funding their education and training out of pocket, the change in tuition policy reduced a major barrier to advancement. Employees unable to pay tuition costs up front and/or wait for a reimbursement, were able to enroll in courses, and participating employers have benefitted from the employee retention fostered by the new tuition policies. A return on investment (ROI) study, based on an analysis of ninety incumbent workers who participated in HCC's Associate's Degree Cohort program, estimates the net return of participation for employers in HCC to be over \$216,000, representing a return on investment of almost 12%.³

A more recent study by employer partner TriHealth showed the following: a lower turnover rate for all groups participating in the Health Careers Collaborative (HCC) programs; greater diversity in all groups involved in the HCC programs, such as an increased percentage of African Americans, Hispanics, and Asian Americans, and a greater percent change in pay over time, compared with the experience of non-participants with similar job codes.⁴

Keys to Success

In addition to cultivating and maintaining strong employer relationships, and being persistent in pursuing change, Janice Urbanik, Executive Director of PCW notes the importance of focusing on small changes in supporting their success:

When we think about systems change, we tend to think about 'grand and glorious' things, but sometimes smaller changes can have significant impact. As people think about approaching systems change, it can be helpful to focus on something quicker and easier than shifting the course of the Titanic. So when we think about systems change, we need to think both big and small.

In addition, the collaborative has benefitted from learning opportunities provided through their involvement in Community Foundation supported collective impact efforts to address a larger set of socio-economic issues in the Cincinnati and tri-state region. HCC strong employer engagement has served as a model for the creation of other industry partnerships in construction and advanced manufacturing that operate under the auspices of PCW.

IMPROVING PUBLIC POLICY

SkillWork's Success in Making Workforce Policy Central in Massachusetts

Type of Change: Public policy and Investments

Organization: SkillWorks and the Workforce Solutions Group (WSG)

Community: Massachusetts

Result: Increased investment in and expansion of Massachusetts's workforce development programs and systems.

The Context

An ambitious initiative that brought together a coalition of public funders and local and national foundations, SkillWorks was established in 2005 with two broad goals: to help low-income individuals attain family-sustaining wage jobs and to improve the quality of the workforce for businesses. At the time SkillWorks launched, Massachusetts' state and local workforce development systems were already experimenting with some practices the initiative promoted as being essential to accomplish its goals, such as workforce partnerships serving businesses and individuals; career coaching; and promoting the family economic self-sufficiency standard as a benchmark for training program outcomes.

Still, funders at the time were frustrated by the relatively small scale of most training programs as well as the lack of attention to systemic issues such as siloed funding streams, continuity of services, long-term career advancement, and lack of community college capacity.

SkillWorks thus invested in a three-pronged strategy of increasing service provider capacity, building sector-based workforce partnerships, and advocating for improved public policy that could lead to long-term, large-scale, sustainable improvements in the workforce development system within Boston and at a state level.

Funders understood that investing in advocacy would be key in institutionalizing SkillWorks' principles and learning in the workforce development system and promoting the advancement of low-income individuals into family sustaining jobs over the long-term.

The Approach

Given the centrality of its systems change agenda, SkillWorks leadership made the decision early on to select a statewide coalition to lead its advocacy efforts, and partnered with Workforce Solutions Group (WSG) to serve as its public policy partner. Initially created with SkillWorks' funding, WSG has now established an independent identity as a multi-stakeholder coalition that promotes "an effective training and education system that increases workers' skills, advances families to self-sufficiency and promotes job creation and economic growth."⁵ Every year, SkillWorks reviews its work plans and manages the alignment of WSG plans with the collaborative's goals.

Contracting with WSG has not only expanded SkillWorks' capacity to operate in the public policy sphere, it also created some distance between collaborative members and the advocacy process, as advocacy may lie beyond the scope of members' organizational missions or priorities. Having WSG as a partner has also strengthened SkillWorks' position for advocacy work, since WSG members have extensive knowledge of the Massachusetts legislature and long-term relationships on which to capitalize for promoting change.

Results

Through its combined efforts with WSG and other stakeholders, SkillWorks has achieved a number of policy wins, including:

- › The creation of and continued funding for the Workforce Competitiveness Trust Fund, a state-funded initiative that supports sector-based workforce development partnerships across Massachusetts
- › Continued funding for the Workforce Training Fund, a state fund financed by a small surcharge on the Unemployment Tax paid by Massachusetts employers to support businesses in training current and newly hired employees
- › Increased state funding for summer jobs for youth
- › Inclusion of funding for the Community College Workforce Development Grant Fund in the 2013 state budget

- › The establishment of 300 annual pre-apprenticeship training slots for young adults and teens in state transportation projects
- › A \$4.5 million increase in job training services and supports to low-income women and teen mothers in the state's Transitional Aid to Families with Dependent Children Employment Services Program.

As its local evaluators, Mt. Auburn Associates, note, in times of severe budget cuts following the Great Recession, SkillWorks has also contributed to minimizing decreases in funding for workforce development.⁶ Reflecting on what has contributed to SkillWorks' effectiveness in the policy change arena, former director, Loh-Sze Leung notes the importance of a consistent long-term investment of effort:

Maintaining a consistent message, building and maintaining relationships allows us to weather currents in the environment. Eventually the timing will be right and that message will stick because of what is going on in the budget or the environment and we can leverage that opportunity. But if we haven't put in the work and maintained the relationships beforehand, we will be less successful when the time comes to move that message forward and really push for change.

To help influence workforce development policy and investments, SkillWorks has sought to change the perspectives and perceptions of practitioners and policymakers and to deepen institutional connections. It achieves this goal through the work of partnerships, capacity building efforts, and support for research needed to inform stakeholders. Its effectiveness in altering perspectives is evidenced by the results of a survey conducted by Mt. Auburn of fifty-one individuals, including people involved in the workforce system and/or the funder collaborative. Survey respondents reported perceiving significant changes in the workforce system that reflect the changes pursued by SkillWorks over the previous 5 years. Responses indicate that, in comparison with five years earlier, workforce development is perceived as a more important issue; there is greater sensitivity to the needs of employers, more collaboration amongst workforce system providers, and increased awareness of the need to focus on postsecondary access and success for adults.⁷

According to evaluators, by altering perspectives that influence policy, SkillWorks appears to have also

influenced Boston's workforce development system so that "SkillWorks' principles now represent the new norms for workforce development" including, as practitioners report, "new practices such as the increased use of academic and career coaching, increased capacity to work with employers, increased collaboration with other workforce development organizations and increased use of data for continuous improvement."

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ENDNOTES

¹ NYACH website www.nyach.org

² *Career Pathways: One City Working Together*, The City of New York/Mayor Bill de Blasio, 2014

³ See *Healthcare Careers Collaborative of Greater Cincinnati Return on Investment Report 2011* published by the Greater Cincinnati Workforce Network.

⁴ Source: *Investing in the Future of the Healthcare Workforce, An Analysis of the Impact of the HCC Programs at TriHealth* by Ryan Moran and Nakul Bhardwaj, MPH, June 2013.

⁵ <http://www.workforcesolutionsgrp.org>

⁶ *SkillWorks Phase II Evaluation: Overview of Outcomes*, Mt. Auburn Associates, September 2014.

⁷ Mt. Auburn Associates, 2014, p. 14



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